



**GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2020
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE**

MINUTES

Governing Board Members Present:

Anthony Apro, Becky Bowling, Tressa Brown, Mary Hammond, David Lee, Sheila Mason, Mark Neikirk, Wayne Onkst, Geneva Parris, Henry "Tip" Richmond, Julie Scoskie, Kevin Smith, Cynthia Torp, Tommy Turner, Jr., and John Wolford.

Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) Staff Present:

Scott Alvey, Jodi Lewis, Linda Redmon, Stuart Sanders, Jessica Stavros, and Teresa Stivers.

Guests Present:

Mike Berry, Secretary, Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet; J. David Smith, Jr., Board President, Kentucky Historical Society Foundation (KHSF), Inc.; Doug High, KHSF Director; Robert Rich, KHSF Board; and Charles Stewart, KHSF Board.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

President Tommy Turner, Jr., called the meeting of the Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) Governing Board to order at 1:06 p.m. EDT and called roll. A quorum was declared.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Minutes of the April 17, 2020, KHS Governing Board meeting were presented to the board in advance for review. President Turner called for corrections or additions. There were none.

Motion by David Lee, second by Tony Apro, that the Minutes of the April 17, 2020, KHS Governing Board meeting be approved. Motion unanimously carried.

III. KHS REPORTS:

- a. KHS Executive Report – KHS Executive Director Scott Alvey presented the executive report on behalf of KHS. Highlights included:
 - i. ***KHS Access during Pandemic:*** KHS reopened public access to the Kentucky History Center on June 8, 2020. KHS was able to do this by securing approval for reopening by following state health guidelines which were adopted and utilized by a KHS taskforce led by KHS Deputy Director Jessica Stavros to focus on key safety issues for KHS staff and visitors. This taskforce asked Emergency Management to review KHS's plan in advance of this opening. KHS continues to adjust programs and services to allow for new mandates and safety protocols. While foot traffic to the Kentucky History Center is still light, KHS teams are continuing their virtual programming and television partnerships to promote the programs and collections of the Society.

- ii. **KHS Strategic Plan:** KHS staff was charged by the Governing Board to develop tactics and measurable outcomes for the KHS Strategic Plan. The KHS leadership team has been meeting and working on these throughout the pandemic. The leadership team is working toward a multi-year plan with programming emphasis on the US 225 celebration (2025-2026), civic action and voting, military history, Kentucky ancestors, National History Day and teacher programming, and historical markers, including the review of 400 Civil War-related markers to develop a system to address questionable language.
 - iii. **KHS Organization Statement to Protests:** KHS issued an organizational statement to the civil protests. This statement has received national attention and KHS has been asked to write an article for the American Association for State and Local History. A link to this article is: <https://history.ky.gov/2020/06/11/kentucky-historical-society-statement-on-protests/>
 - iv. **Governor's Office Televising from KHS:** Governor Andy Beshear did two weeks of COVID-19 pandemic briefings at KHS using both the Kentucky History Center and the Old State Capital. On June 19, 2020, Governor Beshear signed the Juneteenth proclamation at KHS. These media briefings brought positive attention to KHS. Executive Director Alvey was able to secure the pen Governor Beshear used to sign the proclamation and KHS was able to display the actual proclamation for a week at the Kentucky History Center.
 - v. **Jefferson Davis Statue Removal:** KHS was called upon during the removal process of the Jefferson Davis statue from the capitol rotunda. Artifacts were found in the base, which are currently in KHS procession but are the property of Historic Properties.
 - vi. **Membership:** KHS is focusing on better tracking of memberships. With a task force from KHS marketing communications and the development team, KHS is reviewing what membership benefits should be and will present further details at future meetings.
 - vii. **Personnel Updates:** Since the last Governing Board meeting KHS has had one promotion, Stuart Sanders to the position of Director of Research and Collections; one termination, Louise Jones, as Director of Research and Collections; Graduate Editorial Assistant contract end (Austin Zinkle) and new contract start (Chris Leadingham), these positions through KHSF; and still in need of various key positions including the KHS Director of Finance and the KHS Registrar, but budget limits have prevented some of the ability of KHS to hire these and other needed positions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, KHS volunteers have become virtual volunteers and are electronically transcribing collections. KHS staff in 2009 was 100. The current KHS staff number in 2020 is 43.
 - viii. **FY20 Financial Report:** KHS ended fairly on budget, made possible by not filling staff vacancies. When pandemic hit, KHS ceased contract workers and did not hire seasonal staff. KHS did have a significant reduction in revenues in the final quarter (April-June), usually the largest revenue period, from the cancellation of school trips and rentals, but KHS did not incur the costs associated therewith.
- b. **KHS Foundation Report** – Doug High, Director of the KHS Foundation, reported as follows:
- i. **KHSF Support for KHS Programming:** The KHSF board approved its Fiscal Year 2021 budget. This included support for KHS programming in the amount of \$431,000 during the fiscal year.
 - ii. **KHSF End of the Fiscal Year 2020 Donor Campaign:** KHSF received a 6.5 percent response rate to a nearly 3,000-piece mailer in June 2020 which netted 182 individual gifts averaging \$79. KHSF is currently trending about \$5,000 over the same period as it did in 2019. KHSF messaging for donor and sponsor asks are being carefully crafted going forward to meet the challenges of fundraising during these pandemic times. The Foundation is leaning on KHS virtual and broadcast media items for pulling potential donor attention to KHS.

- iii. **Broadcast Media:** The Kentucky History Treasures series launched in Louisville last week for a two-year run while also continuing to run twice per week in Lexington. KHSF is making plans to launch this programming in Paducah as well as in Bowling Green soon. The KHS exhibits team has created a new exhibit area in the Kentucky History Center's key exhibit space, *A Kentucky Journey*, that features the Kentucky History Treasures highlighted items due to the demand of the public who saw an artifact on television who wanted to come and see it in person. WHAS-TV is also doing a *Great Day Live* program from KHS next week.
 - iv. **Kentucky History Half Marathon:** This race is being organized and managed by an outside company. KHSF will retain a sponsorship but will incur no costs. KHSF is working to transfer this sponsorship to another KHS-related program/activity. The 2020 race is anticipated to be canceled due to COVID-19. The Kentucky History Center was serving as the starting/stopping location only for the race in 2020.
 - v. **KHS Holiday and Other Exhibits:** There will not be a holiday train exhibit in 2020 due to conflicts with the train's vendor and its requirements for allowing access for KHS patrons and dates for availability. KHSF is working with KHS exhibit staff to determine what a holiday footprint will be at KHS in 2020 and what can/cannot be done due to the pandemic. A new project that is the best bet for fundraising or sponsorship dollars is to maximize what KHS has with its military history treasures – uniforms, artifacts, and the Kentucky Military History Museum. KHSF hopes to get something showcased in 2021 surrounding Kentucky's military history. KHSF continues to work on Triple Crown Trail with possibly through a start with historical markers at the horse farms instead of tourism site tours which can be brought in later. KHSF is also working with KHS staff in developing the concept for the voting/civic action exhibition at the Old State Capitol.
- c. **KHS Operations and Marketing Communications** – Jessica Stavros, KHS Deputy Director reported as follows:
- i. **KHS Reopening:** KHS was one of the first museums in the state to reopen. There has been a good response – 350 visitors since opening – about half of what KHS did in 2019 – but with no school field trips, rentals, etc. KHS's plan was improved by Franklin County Health Department officials and has received a YELP report on the safety measures undertaken to protect the customers. Approximately twenty percent (20%) of our visitors have been active KHS members. Most customers want to see the Kentucky History Treasures in the *A Kentucky Journey* signature exhibit area. KHS is slated to reopen the Old State Capitol and the Kentucky Military History Museum on August 1, 2020. The KHS COVID-19 Task Force is still working on the schedules and continued safety considerations to reopen these two additional museums. The KHS visitors' services and learning teams are working hard to reopen these two signature museums. KHS has had no contentious visitors in our building and staff and customers feel safe with our protective guidelines.
 - ii. **Online Payments:** The state's online payment processing system, Kentucky Interactive, is working with KHS for processing fees for programming, admissions, summer camp, etc. The next step is for KHS to work with Kentucky Interactive to build a program for 1792 store purchases.
 - iii. **KHS Virtual Programming:** Virtual experiences are working well for customers and staff. Tuesday at the Museum tours and Trivia Thursdays on the third Thursday of the month are currently taking place via KHS social media outlets.
 - iv. **KHS Newsletter:** This publication will be coming to members soon with highlights of KHS programs and services during the pandemic.

- v. **KHS/KHSF Collaboration:** The KHS communications team continues to work with the Foundation on the membership awareness campaign and media outlets for KHS products.
 - vi. **KHS Partnership with Smithsonian:** KHS has joined as an anchor partner in the Smithsonian Institution program called “Made by Us.” This program will focus attention on younger generations to get them involved with and excited about learning and using history.
- d. Museum Programs – Jodi Lewis, KHS Director of Learning, as follows:
- i. **School Field Trips 2020/Adult Learning:** School reservations were on target to smash previous years’ attendance and revenues. However, the learning team has pivoted and been creative and competent in learning new ways of doing things. Summer camps have gone virtual and many have filled up. Camps are reaching students from all across Kentucky, the nation, and even one from overseas. Adult programming is also continuing on virtual platforms. The KHS learning team continues to work on programs to serve schools and teachers. Surveys have gone out to the KHS extensive teacher database on what the teachers need. The National History Day program in 2020 was very successful. Almost 500 Kentucky students participated in regionals, state, and nationals. Thank you to Governing Board members Tony Apro and Mary Hammond for volunteering as judges for this program.
 - ii. **KHS Community Engagement:** The community engagement team has been helping to support other local history organizations across the state on reopening procedures and CARES act grant applications. This team has been working on reviewing historical marker language and training for those KHS staff whose job responsibilities were adjusted during this telecommuting period. This team is also overseeing two (2) virtual internships in cooperation with the University of Kentucky.
 - iii. **Teacher Programming:** KHS just completed the annual Kentucky History Educators Conference virtually. Almost 300 teachers signed up for this conference from across Kentucky from public, private, and parochial schools. Kentucky teachers are begging for these resources. Almost all attendees said they would pay for these conferences. Being held virtually made it available for them to attend. Over fifty percent (50) were new attendees.
- e. Research and Collections – Stuart Sanders, KHS Director of Research and Collections reported as follows:
- i. **KHS Research Library:** The research team is setting goals and desired outcomes of where this team is heading. The library has received some visitation during the pandemic, averaging five (5) to ten (10) visitors per day. Visitors have come from Texas and California. This team continues to process email, mail, and telephone research requests from the public.
 - ii. **Genealogy:** Family history programs have gone virtual which allows KHS to reach broader audiences. Over the past three months, KHS has had attendees from Europe with its virtual *Tea and Sympathy* genealogy program.
 - iii. **CARES Grant:** KHS received a \$10,000 grant from the Kentucky Humanities CARES Act grant that will be utilized for the various Kentucky Ancestors programs.
 - iv. **Collections Acquisition:** KHS received a collection from a Russian family that emigrated to Kentucky in the late nineteenth century. This collection was a part of the recent virtual tour. Descendants of this family (scattered from Texas to California) have shown a great interest in this collection, collaborated with KHS staff on the collection, and are happy it has come to KHS.

- v. **Collection Loans:** KHS collections team is working with Perryville Battlefield in Boyle County to install an exhibit utilizing KHS collections. KHS curators are helping the Battlefield with the installation and of this exhibit.
- vi. **The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society:** *The Register* continues to put out issues with its next issue to include the history of Appalachia post-1970. This team is also working with the Eastern Standard radio program at Eastern Kentucky University, a station that reaches over 10,000 listeners, to have articles from *The Register* authors shared on this platform. *The Register* was also offered as open access through the end of June with more than 25,000 articles downloaded during the three months of free access.
- vii. **Digital Documentary Edition:** The Civil War Governors of Kentucky project continues to expand its reach. It is working to promote this database program to family researchers along with scholars.

IV. ACTION ITEMS:

- a. KHS Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) Operating Budget – Deputy Director Alvey presented to the Governing Board the Fiscal Year 2021 operating budget for the Society. This included support from the state in the amount of \$6,456,700 (the amount from the one-year enacted budget from the Kentucky General Assembly in 2020), federal funds (grants) of \$252,700, operations earned revenue (program fees, rentals, fees and royalties, merchandise sales, etc.) of \$313,500, and private funding support (KHSF) of \$335,000. Anticipated expenses include personnel of \$4,158,700 (includes benefits package of retirement, life and health insurance, and employer-mandated taxes and unemployment payments), and operating and grant expenses of \$3,358,700. KHS had a net carryforward from Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) for \$159,500 that offsets expenses incurred at the start of the new fiscal year and balances the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021 of \$7,514,400 in revenues and \$7,514,400 in expenses.

Motion by Cynthia Torp, second by Geneva Parris, that the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 KHS operating budget be adopted. Motion carried.

- b. KHS Committee Meetings – Due to the pandemic and the social distancing guidelines, it was recommended by the KHS Executive Committee (officers) that KHS begin conducting its committee meetings virtually via teleconference. Changes to the current committee structure will be presented to the Bylaws Committee for consideration and recommendation for revisions to the Bylaws. Teresa Stivers, KHS Director's Office Manager, was requested to forward to the KHS Nominating Committee the current board member demographics, its committee deadlines, and other materials for their work to continue to fill the open positions on the Governing Board to be elected by the KHS membership at the annual meeting in November 2020. Executive Director Alvey and Ms. Stivers will work with the officers of the Governing Board to schedule and coordinate other virtual meetings of the board.

Upon the recommendation of the KHS Executive Committee (officers), a motion that KHS committee meetings be conducted virtually via teleconference. There was no objection and the motion unanimously carried.

V. RELATED REPORTS:

- a. Tourism, Arts, and Heritage Cabinet – Secretary Mike Berry thanked the KHS Governing Board for their service, allowing the cabinet to participate in their meeting, and for their thorough review of the operating budget for the Society. Secretary Berry praised the KHS team for hosting the Governor’s news briefings and for its ability to handle the challenges of reopening during a global pandemic. Secretary Berry stated that KHS was an important part of the front-facing tourism that the cabinet promotes but is also a behind-the-scenes partner to help other agencies and a retail operation too. Secretary Berry encouraged all of the board to stay safe, healthy, and hopeful during these difficult times.
- b. Kentucky Oral History Commission (KOHC) – Commission Chair John Wolford presented a report from the Kentucky Oral History Commission. The Commission had received a \$1,500 CARES Act grant from the Kentucky Humanities Council to process oral histories relating to the COVID-19 pandemic around Kentucky. The Commission also met virtually and amended its report on grants from May. The top grant project applicant received full funding, the next three highest project applicants received the remaining of the proposed funding, with two applicants not receiving funding in that grant cycle. However, the KHS KOHC Administrator, Sarah Schmitt, has contacted the two applicants that did not receive funding in the May cycle to resubmit their applications in a future funding cycle. Chair Wolford also reported that while Ms. Schmitt was telecommuting at this time, she was still very active with the oral history community and assisting with other KHS programs taking place virtually.
- c. Kentucky Museums and Heritage Alliance – Chair Tressa Brown stated that the annual in-person meeting of the Alliance was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Alliance had hoped to have some sessions done virtually; however, the Vice President in charge of that project had taken another job out of state and the virtual program did not get organized for 2020. The Alliance hopes to reschedule the annual in-person meeting in 2021 back in Paducah, where it was to have been held in June 2020. The Alliance is also looking for persons to fill the positions of Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Chair Brown also reported that while some museums and organizations had reopened, many were still not able to do so due to the size of the staff, many with only volunteers, and the age demographic of such workers. The Alliance is seeking reopening information from various organizations to share with the Alliance members on reopening to the public.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Next Governing Board Meeting – Friday, October 16, 2020. The board will be advised if this will be an in-person meeting at the Kentucky History Center in Frankfort or if it will still need to be conducted virtually.
- b. KHS Annual Meeting – Friday, November 6, 2020. The board will be advised if this will be an in-person meeting at the Old State Capitol in the evening or if it will also need to be conducted virtually.



VII. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Governing Board, President Turner called for a motion to adjourn at 2:56 p.m. EDT.

Motion by David Lee, second by Mary Hammond, that the July 17, 2020, KHS Governing Board meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Scott Alvey, KHS Executive Director

Teresa S. Stivers, KHS Director's Office Manager, Recorder